



CONNECT



The European voice of the
adhesive and sealant industry



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How digitisation accelerates R&D and innovation in the adhesives and sealants industry - CONNECT interviews Aldric Tourres of SpecialChem.

FEICA is delighted to welcome back to the Conference Aldric Tourres, Executive Vice President, Head of Sales & Marketing, SpecialChem.

This year, Aldric will share his insights into how digitisation can speed up and improve R&D and innovation in our industry. CONNECT spoke to Aldric to get a preview of some of the key themes he will be discussing at FEICA 2017 in Sardinia.

CONNECT: You talk about companies "digitally plugging into their growth markets", and "capitalising on specialised online networks". Could you expand on these concepts a bit more?

Tourres: Everyone has a network of clients, suppliers and other stakeholders. Of course, networks have existed outside the digital world since the beginning of time. To give you a couple of examples: networks in academia have been around since long before the digital age, and have now evolved to exploit the benefits offered by digitisation to improve collaboration. LinkedIn is an example of a general "digital network", whereas SpecialChem of course facilitates a series of specialised networks in the chemicals sector including our networks in coatings, adhesives and sealants.

You may have frequent contact with your network, but more

often than not, this contact is ad hoc, and there are probably some players in your network that you have no contact with. In short, communicating about a project in an efficient and timely manner with all the players that could potentially contribute to its success is impossible, and that's where digitisation comes in.



Aldric Tourres at FEICA 2016 in Vienna

CONNECT: What are the benefits of digitisation?

Tourres: Currently the R&D process is long and inefficient. People are wary of investing. Digitisation allows you to build a community with all stakeholders and to exploit that community much more fully and quickly. You can bring in the voice of the market much earlier to deliver faster, more comprehensive and beneficial collaboration.

CONNECT: How does this relate to the stagegate process?

Tourres: In my view, the traditional stagegate process is dead! In its place, I propose a model I like to call the "porous stagegate process". The essential features of this model are that it:

- Allows you to connect to the end-market and easily adapt a project to perfectly meet the needs of the end-market.
- Allows you to get external parties to contribute to the R&D process.
- Allows multiple rounds of rapid, iterative development; something that was previously impossible without costing lots of time and money. This accelerates R&D and at the same time delivers better results.

Of course, digitisation will not replace the need for good people. On the contrary, it is digitisation combined with human interpretation that will make the difference.



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CONNECT: *Where does this concept come from and what's the evidence for its success?*

Tourres: You can consider it a form of agile development inspired by the IT industry, which successfully uses short, iterative development loops in the software development process. SpecialChem has adapted the methodology and successfully applied it in the speciality chemicals sector.

CONNECT: *Do you see any challenges in applying this methodology to the adhesives and sealants industry?*

Tourres: The adhesives and sealants industry is very traditional and I'm not here to scare people! Digital is not here to replace human interaction, but to improve the speed and efficiency of those interactions.

Digitisation is already happening in the adhesives and sealants value chain. Building on its work with leading adhesive and sealant raw materials suppliers such as Evonik, BASF, Dow and Dynasol over the last 16 years, SpecialChem is now discussing digital transformation strategies with some of these companies. Once people see proof of concept in closely related businesses, they will be keen to learn what digitisation can do for their business. I'm sure my presentation will provide the Conference delegates with plenty of food for thought!

Get the full story in Aldric's presentation at FEICA 2017

Breakout IV:

Market Trends and Innovation -
14 September 16:00 - 16:30



This year's Breakout Sessions encompass:

Market trends and innovation

New approaches to isocyanates and polyurethane adhesives and sealants

Elastomers and elastic adhesives

Innovations in construction

Olefin-based hotmelts

Manufacturing and processing

Safe use of adhesives

Pressure-sensitive adhesives

Bio-based adhesives

Additives and resins

For more information on FEICA and the full conference program and speaker lineup:

Contact: Tel: +32 2 676 73 20; Email: info@feica.eu; Web: www.feica-conferences.com